

**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS**  
**For**  
**Rural Child Care Services Initiative**



**ISSUED BY**

**STATE OF ALABAMA**  
**DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES**

**Child Care Services Division**  
**Office of Child Care Subsidy**

**August 23, 2004**

# **REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)**

## **Rural Child Care Services Initiative**

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- Attachment A – *Budget*
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- Attachment C – *Eligible Rural Counties*
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## I. GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

### A. TERMS AND CONDITIONS

#### 1. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this Request for Proposals (RFP) is to solicit proposals for an entity (private or public, for profit or nonprofit agency or organization, within the state of Alabama) to administer and distribute funds to qualified child care centers under the Department of Human Resources' (hereafter referred to as the Department) *Rural Child Care Services Initiative*. The goal of the *Rural Child Care Services Initiative* is to support the delivery of child care services to low-income, working families in rural Alabama counties. The *Rural Child Care Services Initiative* is administered as part of the Department's Child Care Subsidy Program. The mission of the Child Care Subsidy Program is to provide Alabama's low-income families equal access to affordable and quality child care services.

The Department is announcing the availability of funds received pursuant to Alabama Act 04-456. Funds totaling **\$800,000** will be distributed for child care services in rural Alabama counties during fiscal year 2005.

Only one (1) project will be funded

Project Period: Up to 12 months

Note: The Department is not bound by any estimates in this RFP. Actual funding will depend on the availability of federal and state.

Address all proposals to:

**Jeanetta Green, Director  
Office of Child Care Subsidy  
Child Care Services Division  
Alabama Department of Human Resources  
50 Ripley Street  
P. O. Box 304000  
Montgomery, AL 36130-4000**

- a) Proposals must be received at the above address by:

**Date: September 3, 2004**

**Time: 12:00 Noon (Central Time)**

**Late or incomplete Proposals will not be accepted.** Also, no changes or supplements to the Proposal will be allowed after the deadline, except for those provided for and/or requested by the Department.

- b) Special Note: The Department encourages applicants to consider using an alternative delivery method to normal mail delivery (for example, a commercial carrier, such as Federal Express or United Parcel Service; U.S. Postal Service Express mail) to transmit your proposal to the Department. Alternative delivery methods also allow applicants to track the delivery of their proposal, which may be useful in ensuring timely delivery of proposals. **Applicants should allow ample time for proposals to reach the Department by the deadline date and time.**

If you use an alternative method to deliver your proposal, address proposals to:

**Jeanetta Green, Director  
Office of Child Care Subsidy  
Child Care Services Division  
Alabama Department of Human Resources  
50 Ripley Street  
Montgomery, AL 36104**

- c) Applicants may submit written questions regarding this RFP to:  
**Office of Child Care Subsidy  
Child Care Services Division  
Alabama Department of Human Resources  
50 Ripley Street  
P. O. Box 304000  
Montgomery, AL 36130-4000  
FAX: (334) 353-1491  
Email: [jgreen@dhr.state.al.us](mailto:jgreen@dhr.state.al.us) or [lcaver@dhr.state.al.us](mailto:lcaver@dhr.state.al.us)**
- d) To be considered, all proposals must be concise, describing the agency's ability to meet the RFP requirements. Agencies should avoid fancy bindings and promotional materials within the proposal. All material submitted becomes the property of the Department.

## 2. RESERVATIONS

- a) The Department reserves the right, in its sole discretion to reject any or all of the proposals received and/or cancel the RFP if it is deemed to be in the best interest of the Department to do so.
- b) The Department reserves the right to waive any minor irregularity in an otherwise valid proposal that would not jeopardize the overall program and to award a contract in the

best interest of the Department. Minor irregularities are those which will not have a significant adverse effect on overall program cost or performance.

- c) The Department reserves the right to reject a proposal from any entity whose history in working with the Department indicates that the entity and the Department have historically been unable to work in harmony and cooperation.
  - d) Issuance of the RFP in no way constitutes a commitment by the Department to select a proposal, to award a contract or to pay any costs incurred in the preparation of a response to this request.
  - e) The Department reserves the right to negotiate with any applicant whose proposal is within the competitive range with respect to technical plan and cost, as well as to select an applicant other than the applicant offering the lowest price.
  - f) The Department reserves the right to adopt to its use all or any part of an applicant's proposal and to use any idea or all ideas presented in a proposal.
  - g) The Department reserves the right to have some or all of the applicants provide oral presentations of their proposals.
  - h) The Department reserves the right to amend this RFP.
3. PROPOSAL SUBMISSION
- a) The proposal must contain original signatures of persons legally authorized to bind the applicant to the proposal.
  - b) The original proposal along with **four (4)** copies must be submitted to the Department.
  - c) The proposal must be responsive to the RFP and must use the forms and format as specified by the Department.
  - d) The proposal must be the work product of the applicant. If the proposal is determined not to be the work product of the applicant, the proposal may be rejected.

#### 4. PROPOSAL SELECTION

- a) If a proposal is selected, the selection will be based upon evaluation methodology developed by the Department (See Section C). However, selection of a proposal may or may not result in a contract. The Department reserves the right to reject a proposal, to select another proposal, or to cancel the RFP.
- b) Notification in writing will be provided to all applicants of the selection or rejection of their proposal.

#### 5. QUALIFICATIONS OF APPLICANT

The applicant should state in the proposal qualifications that will lead to successful completion of the requirements of this RFP including, but not limited to, the following:

- a) The applicant must possess a high degree of professional skill in the area of child development, early care and education, and/or social service. In addition, applicants must demonstrate the ability to manage Department funds in accordance with Federal and State regulations and guidelines. Private for profit organizations, non-profit organizations, and public entities are eligible to submit a proposal.
- b) A summary of the structure of the applicant organization and evidence of sufficient organizational resources to ensure successful project management and successful completion of services with a high standard of quality including:
  - (1) Description of the legal status of the organizations (i.e., non profit for profit, sole proprietor, partnership, corporation, and whether public or private)
  - (2) Description and names of the program's governing board of directors and the names, title, and responsibilities of all officers, identifying those who are authorized to negotiate a contract with the Department and who have responsibility and accountability for the contract.
  - (3) A brief history of the applicant, with the date of incorporation or if unincorporated the date the

business began; other programs operated in the past and currently; and prior names of the organization if any.

(4) For non-governmental agencies, a **copy** of the most recent form 990.

(5) Federal Employer Identification Number (FEIN)

- b) The applicant must identify individuals and service sites in various communities that the agency intends to use in performing this service. Only prior work by the applicant that is relevant to this RFP should be documented. A brief history of the formation and development of the applicant organization must be provided.
- c) A job description of each type of position that will be used in providing the service. Such description should include specific duties of the position and the process or procedure for supervision, minimum education, training and experience required, and length and type of in-service training to be provided.
- d) Information indicating the ability to secure staff to provide the service.
- e) Any special consideration of a technical or administrative nature (i.e., management or financial controls) that would tend to enhance program performance.
- f) Any licenses held by the applicant.
- g) Minimum qualifications established by the Department in the RFP.

## 6. BUDGET INFORMATION

A budget detailing all reasonable and necessary expenditures of the proposal must be submitted. The budget information must be compiled in the manner specified in Attachment A. A narrative description of each line item and also the responsibilities of all personnel must also be submitted.



## **B. NOTICE**

If a proposal is accepted and a contract is executed on the basis of a proposal, the applicant will be subject to the following requirements:

### **1. TIMELY SUBMISSION**

Reports and data delineated in Part II-A, PROGRAM SPECIFICATIONS, must be submitted on a timely basis in the format required by the Department.

### **2. ACCOMPLISHMENT REPORTS**

The Department may request written reports of achievement and the applicant will be required to comply with such requests.

### **3. PROGRESS REVIEW MEETINGS**

The Department may request progress review meetings and the applicant will be required to comply with such a request.

### **4. PROGRAM AUDITS AND RECORD KEEPING**

The Applicant must comply with financial and programmatic audits as well as record keeping requirements as may be established by the Department. Reports and data requested by the Department must be submitted on a timely basis in a format requested by the Department. Program monitoring will occur on an ongoing basis and written reports will be reviewed and evaluated by the child care subsidy staff at the Department.

### **5. PROGRAM EVALUATION**

A performance evaluation tool developed by the Department will be used to evaluate the degree to which agencies administer programs according to applicable Federal and State regulations and Department policies. Agencies that are not maintaining acceptable performance standards will be subject to corrective action including repayment of funds and/or termination of contract.

6. INVESTIGATIONS

The Department will require the applicant's cooperation and assistance in any investigations of compliance including allegations of abuse, neglect or exploitation.

7. OTHER

Other requirements as may be established by the Department and communicated in writing to the applicant.

**C. EVALUATION CRITERIA**

1. The Department will review and select proposals received in accordance with the general criteria defined herein.
2. Failure of the applicant to provide information required in this RFP may result in the disqualification of the proposal.
3. A comparative scoring process, using detailed criteria, will measure the degree to which each proposal meets the general evaluation criteria. A committee composed of representatives from the state and county offices of the Department of Human Resources and other agencies will review all proposals based on the following criteria:
  - a) Demonstrated ability to provide the specified services to families and providers within the designated counties service area.
  - b) Adequacy and completeness of the proposal with regard to the information specified in the RFP, and compliance with the provisions contained in the RFP.
  - c) Qualifications and experience of the applicant to successfully complete the contract.
  - d) Technical content of the proposal concerning the program description and the management controls to be applied.
  - e) Reasonableness and amount of the proposed cost, the current financial stability of the agency and the ability of the agency to handle programs on a **cost reimbursement basis**. However, the proposed cost will not be the primary factor in the selection process.
  - f) Degree to which the agency's most recent financial audit is free of material weaknesses and compliant with the

requirements of laws, regulations, and contracts and grants applicable to each of its funding programs.

- g) Other criteria as may be determined by the Department.

## II. SPECIFIC INSTRUCTIONS

### A. PROGRAM SPECIFICATIONS

The mission of the Department's Child Care Subsidy Program is to provide Alabama's families equal access to affordable and quality child care services. The Department is responsible for directing and approving the development, implementation and administration of all services authorized under the Child Care Subsidy Program in the State of Alabama. This includes: interpreting federal and state laws, regulations and requirements; establishing Program and funding priorities; promulgating all rules, policies and procedures governing the services to be provided; and planning, coordinating and directing all Program services. The purpose of the *Rural Child Care Services Initiative* is to support the delivery of child care services to working families in rural Alabama counties. The Department seeks a knowledgeable child care consortium in rural Alabama to distribute funds, authorized by the state legislature, to rural counties.

#### 1. POPULATION TO BE SERVED

- a) **Eligible Child Care Program:** In order for a child care program to be eligible to receive assistance under the *Rural Child Care Services Initiative* the program must meet the following criteria.
  - (1) The provider must be a legally operating, **licensed or exempt from licensure center** currently providing care services to children and anticipates providing these services throughout Fiscal Year 2005;
  - (2) The provider must be located in a county designated as a rural county. (See Attachment C); and,
  - (3) The provider must be registered to accept children through the Child Care Subsidy Program.

- b) **Number to be Served:** Funds should be distributed to at least one eligible center in each rural county designated by the consortium. Exception: If no eligible center exists in a county the funds allocated for that county may be distributed to other rural counties. See **Attachment C** for a list of the estimated numbers of centers located in each rural county. Applicants must include detailed explanation of the methodology that will be used to determine how many providers will receive funding in each rural county.
- c) **Eligible Expenses:** The Applicant budget must reflect only those expenditures needed to administer, distribute, and monitor the use of funds to eligible centers in rural counties. Eligible providers may utilize allocated funds for the following eligible expenses.
  - (1) Funds may be used to provide direct child care services to low-income working families. Families must meet Child Care Subsidy Program income and eligibility criteria. (See Attachment D).
  - (2) Funds may be used to assist eligible providers in obtaining training and technical assistance in areas appropriate to child care services such as training in health and safety, nutrition, first aid, the recognition of communicable diseases, child abuse detection and prevention, and care of children with special needs.

## 2. SERVICE DESCRIPTION

A successful proposal will demonstrate the Applicants ability to perform the following functions in implementing the *Rural Child Care Services Initiative*:

- a) **Monitoring of providers:** The Agency will be responsible for conducting monitoring of child care providers that receive funds under the *Rural Child Care Services Initiative* according to policy established by the Department to determine their compliance with Program guidelines including correct billing.
- b) **Providing prudent management of departmental funds:** Agencies are responsible for managing Departmental funds in accordance with applicable Federal and State regulations. Agencies are required to maintain sufficient documentation of

any and all expenses reimbursed from Departmental funds. This documentation must include information on how funds were expended by eligible providers. Agencies are required to have an annual A-133 audit conducted in accordance with Department guidelines and federal and state regulations. The Department will also conduct periodic programmatic and fiscal audits to determine program compliance.

- c) **Completing and submitting timely data and reports required by the Department:** Agencies are required to submit accurate billing reports on a monthly basis, and other reports as required by the Department for the management of the Program. Agencies must have procedures in place for eligible centers to submit monthly reports of expenditures.

## **B. SUBMISSION OF PROPOSAL**

The extent to which the applicant demonstrates understanding of the nature of the proposed project will have a substantial bearing on the evaluation of the proposal. Proposals shall contain certain specified information and should adhere to the format presented here. Each copy of the proposal shall contain the following:

1. **Title Page (no points; 1 page)** with the following information:
  - a) Agency submitting the Proposal.
  - b) Name, title, phone number and address of person who can respond to inquiries regarding the proposal. Original signature of person(s) legally authorized to bind the applicant to the proposal.
2. **Program Narrative: (20 points: maximum of 3 pages)** This section should contain information which demonstrates the applicant's understanding of the nature of the proposed project including an understanding of the need for and purpose of the program
  - a) A brief summary of the applicant's understanding of the requirements set forth in this RFP. The narrative must address the following:
    - (1) The project objectives (as the applicant views them) necessary to fulfill service provision and program goals and including all service

elements contained in the specifications sections of the RFP (Section II, A).

- (2) A description of the proposed program components and a rationale for each component based on either existing research and/or agency experience.
- (3) A clear explanation of the methods by which the agency intends to provide the service(s).
- (4) An implementation plan which lists for each service the activities which will be conducted to accomplish the objective and a beginning and completion date for each activity.

3. **Eligible Provider Selection and Distribution of Funds Methodology: (40 points; maximum 4 pages)** Detail the methodology the Applicant will use to select eligible child care providers in accordance with the criteria in SECTION II-A.

Provide a detailed explanation of the methodology the Applicant will use to determine the amount of funds that shall be distributed in each county area and the amount of funds that will be distributed to each eligible provider within a county. The methodology **shall be based on a meaning formula taking into account service delivery area, population, and services required in the service area.** Include in the explanation the timeframes for eligible centers to submit requests for funds, method for documenting eligible expenditure prior to reimbursement, method of reimbursement to eligible providers, and timeframes as applicable. Identify how this selection process will meet the goals of the *Rural Child Care Services Initiative*.

4. **Prior Experience: (20 points; maximum 3 pages)** Describe the structure of the applicant organization (Per the criteria outlined in Section II-B) and its capacity to deliver the service(s). Describe prior experience in serving the target population and any prior history of issuing monthly payments or reimbursements. For applicants new to the field, document your experience and expertise related to this RFP.

- a) The applicant should provide copies of the following documents:

- (1) Documentation that the Applicant agency is registered with Alabama's Secretary of State to conduct affairs in Alabama and documentation of its for profit or not for profit status.
- (2) Names of members of the board of directors.
- (3) Copies of all licenses held by the Applicant for licensed day care centers, family day care homes and group day care homes and/or approval to operate an exempt from licensure child care facility.
- (4) Disclosure of any staff member's affiliations with licensed day care centers, family day care homes and group day care homes and/or exempt from licensure child care facilities including board membership, consultant and management responsibility.

5. **Staff Recruitment and Job Descriptions: (10 points, maximum 1 page for description of staff recruitment; a separate page for each staff position title).** The Proposal should indicate if the Applicant has sufficient staff available to perform the services required under this RFP. Indicate the number of anticipated staff for each position title.

Job descriptions must be provided for each staff position that will be involved in performing the services required in this proposal. For each staff position involved in providing services in this proposal the job description must include:

- a) Title of the position
- b) Working hours
- c) Salary range
- d) Narrative job summaries
- e) Specific responsibilities
- f) Educational and experience requirements

6. **Management and Financial Controls: (20 points, maximum 1 page)** Indicate procedures in place to assure that Departmental funds are handled in accordance with federal and state regulations and procedure for maintaining accountability of funds including but not limited to:
- a) Procedures for documenting expenditures of funds
  - b) Financial structure for receipting funds and issuing reimbursements to eligible providers
  - c) Procedures for maintaining accurate inventory of supplies and equipment purchased with Departmental funds
  - d) Clear and concise plan for allocation of funds if the Applicant operates under more than one funding source.
  - e) Degree to which the most recent financial audit is free of material weaknesses and compliant with the requirements of laws, regulations, contracts and grants applicable to each of its funding programs.
7. **Budget: (20 points)** Prepare budget using the attached Budget form. Attach a detailed budget justification (**maximum 2 pages**) that describes the activities and responsibilities of all personnel as well as other proposed line item expenses. The evaluation process will give priority to Proposals that include budgets with a greater percentage of funds for direct services rather than program administration. **Indirect cost fees and/or administrative fees are not allowable.**



### **III. A T T A C H M E N T S**